



LOCAL 90

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

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**Testimony on Behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical
Workers before the Education Committee
March 9, 2009**

Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee, I am submitting written testimony today on behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) to respectfully oppose bill 6370 AAC A Middle College System, and the Governor's proposal to transfer the oversight of apprenticeship training from the Department of Labor to the Middle College System.

For many years, the Department of Labor has had oversight and jurisdiction over apprenticeship through its Office of Apprenticeship Training. There are currently over 2,800 employers and labor/management committees employing more than 5,500 apprentices in registered apprenticeship programs in CT. The IBEW has felt confident in the authority of the Department to oversee such programs, and has been satisfied with the system to date. The primary focus of the apprenticeship program is job training and workforce development, and therefore we feel it is only natural that supervision of such programs lie within the Department of Labor.

Another portion of this bill states that the registration fees associated with the apprenticeship program shall go directly into the General Fund. In the past, such fees have gone to the General Fund, but then credited to the Department of Labor for the purposes of administering the apprenticeship program. We feel it is very important that fees associated with such an important program are used to support the agency charged with managing and overseeing such program.

We applaud the Governor and our legislators for taking an aggressive look at the way our state operates; however in this instance we feel change is not necessary. The Office of Apprenticeship Training within the Department of Labor runs smoothly and helps to promote workforce development, job training, education, and safety. Please reject this proposal and keep apprenticeship within the Department of Labor.

Thank you for your consideration.

IBEW